

# Did You Know?

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## Doublemint *Mentha ×gracilis* 'Madalene Hill'

- Doublemint is unusual because it has both peppermint (menthol) and spearmint (carvone) essential oils, providing a subtle and more complex minty flavor. This goes against the genetic rule stating that this is impossible.
- Doublemint is a cross between *Mentha arvensis* and *Mentha spicata*.
- It is named for Madalene Hill, a grower from Texas, who began growing this culinary mint in the 1950's and worked to increase cultivation and use of this culinary mint. She and husband Jim owned Hilltop Herb Farm in Texas.
- Originally known as red-stemmed apple mint, doublemint has stems which become a vibrant red in cooler growing seasons.
- The leaves of doublemint are opposite and glossy green. It grows to 24 to 30 inches tall.
- As all mints, the plants spread through underground runners. Control the spread by growing in a pot or limited area.
- Doublemint gum, originally of the Wrigley Company, is named for having double the amount of distilled peppermint oils, not this particular mint variety.
- Grows best in full sun with moist, well-drained soil, though it will tolerate some shade. Fertilize sparingly for the best flavor.
- Cutting and using this plant (as with many herbs) will help it retain a bushy more compact habit.
- The essential oils in mint are the highest when the plant is in full bloom.
- This mint is popular in Vietnamese cooking as well as in fruit salads, with peas, teas, pies and other desserts.

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